

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-13. (Canceled)

14. (New) A method for preventing the buildup of excessive torque loads on a flexible shaft rotating at a specified rate of speed within a flexible tubular vacuum conduit, both the rotating flexible shaft and the conduit being components of a system for removing dust from an angled vent having a vent opening, the method comprising the steps of:

providing an external brush coupled to a first end of the flexible shaft, the flexible shaft being disposed within the conduit, said conduit having a diameter substantially less than the internal cross sectional area of the angled vent for allowing the conduit to be passed through the angle in the vent;

inserting said external brush into said vent opening thereby substantially occluding said vent;

connecting an electric motor to a second end of the flexible shaft to rotate the flexible shaft substantially within the conduit and to rotate the external brush outside the conduit to dislodge dust within the vent;

applying a vacuum source to a first end portion of said conduit not located within said vent to draw an air stream from an opposite end portion of said conduit located within said vent to thereby draw dust from within the vent that has been dislodged by said external brush;

providing a swivel cuff between said vacuum source and said first end portion of said conduit, said swivel cuff having a base with a first threaded end for securing said swivel cuff proximate to the vacuum source and a collar rotatable with respect to said base, said collar being removably secured to said first end portion of said conduit; and

minimizing interference between said rotating flexible shaft and said conduit by allowing said collar and said conduit to rotate during at least one interval in which

said electric motor is operating and said flexible shaft is rotating, whereby allowing said collar and said conduit to rotate during operation of the electric motor prevents the buildup of excessive torque loads on said rotating flexible shaft.